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SUBJECT: INAPPROPRIATE HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINE CAUSE OF BUKI
DEATH

Classified By: A/DCM MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

11. (C) Given the many rumors circulating concerning the sudden death of General Sylvain Buki, second-in-command of the FARDC, the GDRC took the relatively unusual step of ordering an autopsy. Autopsy results were shared with Minister of Defense Adolphe Onusumba (from the RCD, Buki's party) and Air Force General John Numbi (from President Kabila's political family). A/DCM spoke (separately) to both men. Cause of death (both reported) was found to result from a lethal mix of herbal (homeopathic) medicines prescribed by a "traditional doctor." Onusumba said that Buki had gone to the traditional doctor to be treated for what he, Buki, diagnosed as malaria. Numbi, however, said that Buki went to the herbalist to be quickly cured of his HIV/AIDs, from which he had suffered for six years. Buki was impatient with the antiretrovirals he had been taking, Numbi said, and wanted to be "healed" so he could get married in December.

12. (C) Comment: The autopsy results have been widely accepted in the DRC, mostly because Buki's antipathy towards "regular" doctors and his preference for traditional healers was well known. Only an isolated few -- mostly extremists -- members of the RCD continue to insist that Buki was poisoned.

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